

tissue to be resected structural integrity of luminal tissue is maintained, the operating capsule including a suturing assembly and defining a cutting zone adjacent to the suturing assembly;

a flexible member extending proximally from the operating capsule to a control handle, wherein, when the operating capsule is in an operative position within a body lumen, the flexible member extends through the body and out a natural body orifice to the control handle; and

a tissue grabber drawing the selected portion of tissue into the cutting zone, wherein the suturing assembly fastens together portions of tissue adjacent to the selected portion of tissue.

44. (Amended) A system for resecting tissue from within a body lumen, comprising:

a flexible endoscope;

an operating head including a coupling structure for selectively coupling to the endoscope, the operating head including an anvil and a stapling mechanism moveable with respect to one another between a closed position in which the anvil and the stapling mechanism are adjacent to one another and a tissue receiving position in which the anvil is separated from the stapling mechanism, the operating head being sized so that, when in an operative position entirely located within a body lumen, structural integrity of luminal tissue is maintained;

a flexible sheath extending from a proximal end of the operating head so that, when the operating head is in an operative position within a body lumen, a proximal end of the flexible sheath extends out of the body lumen;

a flexible grasping mechanism extending through the sheath for drawing tissue

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into a space between the stapling mechanism and the anvil; and

a control handle coupled to the proximal end of the flexible sheath.

49. (Amended) A method for resecting tissue from within a body lumen, comprising the steps of:

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- a. inserting an operating head coupled to a flexible endoscope into a body lumen via a naturally occurring body orifice, wherein the operating head includes an anvil and a stapling mechanism;
 - b. advancing the operating head over the endoscope within the body lumen to a desired position relative to a selected portion of tissue to be resected, wherein, when in the desired position, the entire operating head is received within the body lumen with the flexible endoscope bending to substantially conform to an unstressed configuration of the body lumen;
 - c. moving at least one of the anvil and the stapling mechanism relative to the other from a closed position in which the anvil and the stapling mechanism are adjacent to one another to a tissue receiving position in which the anvil is separated from the stapling mechanism;
 - d. drawing the selected portion of tissue into a tissue receiving chamber within the operating head;
 - e. moving at least one of the anvil and the stapling mechanism relative to the other from the tissue receiving position to a stapling position in which a surrounding portion of tissue adjacent to the selected portion of tissue is clamped between the anvil and the stapling mechanism;